

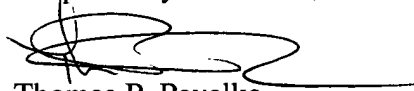
REMARKS

Claims 3-25 are pending. Claims 1 and 2 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer in favor of new claims 17 and 23. New claims 18-22, 24 and 25 are supported by the originally filed claims.

Claims 1-16 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Martensson (WO 96/27721) in view of Parasin (U.S. Patent No. 5,165,816). However, as neither Martensson nor Parasin teach guiding wedges comprising a distal angled surface and a section extending from the distal angled section to the core, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that all objections and rejections are overcome. Applicants respectfully request entry of the above amendments and passage of the application to allowance. If any issues remain which may best be resolved through a telephone communication, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at the local Washington, D.C. telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,


Thomas P. Pavelko
Registration No. 31,689

TPP/EPR/mat
Attorney Docket No.: TPP 30887CIP2

STEVENS, DAVIS, MILLER & MOSHER, L.L.P.
1615 L Street, N.W., Suite 850
Washington, D.C. 20005-2477
Telephone: (202) 785-0100
Facsimile: (202) 408-5200 or (202) 408-5088

Date: October 28, 2003